

Novel Coronavirus Statement To State Employees

All State Employees:

As you have undoubtedly seen in media reports, there have been confirmed cases of COVID-19, commonly called coronavirus, in several states, with six deaths in the United States thus far. I wanted to take a moment to update state employees on the situation in Louisiana and on the steps you can take to prevent the spread of illness.

Though we do not currently have a confirmed case of COVID-19 in Louisiana, it is important to be prepared, which is what we have been doing since the outbreak in mainland China. Already in Louisiana, the Department of Health has been communicating on a very regular basis with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at the federal level as well as health providers, hospitals and doctors to proactively share information about symptoms and also guidance about when someone needs to be tested. We have the capability to test for coronavirus at the Office of Public Health's State Laboratory, and we will be transparent with the public if we have a confirmed case in Louisiana, which we currently do not.

The same actions you take to prevent the spread of flu are also helpful in preventing any respiratory illness, including COVID-19: cover your cough, wash your hands often and well, and stay home when you're sick.

If you have traveled to China, South Korea, Iran, Italy or Japan within the previous 14 days and experience fever, cough or another kind of illness, contact your health care provider as soon as possible and tell them your symptoms and about your recent travel.

In addition, it is still flu season and your chances of getting the flu are higher than of getting coronavirus. It is still a good idea to get a flu shot if you have not already done so or to take a flu antiviral if it is prescribed.

Yesterday, we held the first Unified Command Group meeting about coronavirus to ensure our state agencies are coordinating and communicating effectively across all departments about this illness. In addition, we have created a COVID-19 Task Force to lead Louisiana's planning for different scenarios relating to the spread of coronavirus. It will offer guidance to state agencies, local governments, businesses and organizations.

As an initial step, the COVID-19 Task Force is recommending that all state agencies review and update their Continuity of Operations Plans (COOP) that were developed statewide in 2012 under GOHSEP's direction to take coronavirus into account.

For updates on the state's response to the coronavirus situation, visit the [Louisiana Department of Health](#) website.

Thank you for all of your hard work on behalf of the people of Louisiana. Together, we will work to keep the people of Louisiana healthy and to prevent the spread of illness in our state.

Sincerely,
Governor John Bel Edwards

From The Director



I hope you all had a chance to enjoy some time observing the Mardi Gras holiday. We are now in the heart of our annual preparations for the start of hurricane season in coordinating statewide training, exercises and outreach.

We have completed our impressive State Emergency Operations Center (State EOC) upgrades along with our improvements to the Overwatch and Media Room. We now have state of the art technology and communication abilities that will enhance the collaboration among GOHSEP and our partners for years to follow.

This year begins again with high river levels and very wet conditions across most of the state. The State EOC continues to monitor conditions and provide support to local resource requests for assistance. We are actively engaged with our newest challenge of the coronavirus or COVID-19. I encourage everyone to share the preventative information for the flu and coronavirus being issued by the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC) and the [Louisiana Department of Health](#) (LDH). While there have been no COVID-19 cases in Louisiana, it is important to follow those recommendations to help protect you, your family and your co-workers.

Thanks for all you do for the people of Louisiana,
- James Waskom

Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Frequently Asked Questions

03/03/2020 - State of Louisiana

Q: Are there any confirmed cases in Louisiana?

A: As of 03/02/20, there are no confirmed cases in Louisiana.

Q: What is the current situation?

A: While the CDC now expect community spread in some parts of the U.S., the immediate threat to the U.S. remains low. We are not seeing the same level of spread other countries are seeing. That said, it is important to be prepared, which is what we have been doing since the outbreak in mainland China.

Q: What is the protocol in place for responding to a pandemic like COVID-19?

A: COVID-19 in many ways behaves similarly to influenza. The CDC recommends using the Pandemic Influenza Preparedness plan as our model for the response because COVID-19 in many ways behaves similarly to influenza. The Louisiana Department of Health has been working on our Pandemic Preparedness Plan for the last 15 years, and we have been preparing for COVID-19 since early January 2020. The Governor directed the formation of a COVID-19 Task Force with representation from state agencies and federal partners key to preparing for a COVID-19 outbreak to guide updating pandemic flu and continuity of operations planning documents and advise the Unified Command Group.

Q: What have you been doing as far as monitoring people who may have been exposed?

A: Our first priority was to ensure we were monitoring any travelers who returned to Louisiana from visiting China, where many of the cases have occurred, and especially Wuhan, the city that experienced the largest outbreak. We touch base with those travelers each day and ask about their symptoms during a 14-day period of observation. We are also ensuring that travelers know the destinations where non-essential travel should be avoided.

Q: Do we have the capability to test?

A: We do have the capability to test for COVID-19 in-state. Providers should contact the Office of Public Health Division's Infectious Disease Epidemiology Program (IDEpi). Testing is prioritized for individuals that meet clinical and risk criteria.

Q: What's the next major step in the Department's plan for responding to an outbreak?

A: Mirroring the federal government's response, we are moving from a 'containment' approach in which we focused on restricting travel from the outbreak area in Wuhan city and Hubei province in China and monitoring returning travelers from other parts of China, to a 'mitigation' approach in which we anticipate and plan for person-to-person transmission in the community somewhere in the United States and ensure state and local governments, health care providers, schools, businesses, and community members are adequately prepared to take action to reduce the spread of COVID-19. We don't want people to be alarmed, but we do want them to be prepared. We also want businesses and health care facilities to be prepared to make sure people are safe and protected so we can avoid an unnecessary spread, including planning now for actions that can be taken to avoid the spread of infections such as mandatory teleworking and canceling unnecessary large gatherings.

Q: What are you doing to make sure hospitals are prepared?

A: LDH has been working with Louisiana Hospital Association (LHA) and the ESF8 Network to prepare hospitals for an outbreak and ensure they have the proper supplies needed as well as protocols are in place for anyone treated who tests positive. We haven't had any indication that hospitals don't have what they need on the supply side.

Q: Is it safe to receive a package from any area where COVID-19 has been reported?

A: Yes. The likelihood of an infected person contaminating commercial goods is low and the risk of catching the virus that causes COVID-19 from a package that has been moved, traveled, and exposed to different conditions and temperature is also low.

Q: Are you in regular contact with the federal government?

A: Yes. We are in very regular contact with the CDC and HHS; we're currently averaging several calls per week just with the CDC. In addition we have standing calls across state health departments and a standing call internally in Louisiana. This is all **very important so that we all have the latest data, are on the same page, and can adapt our plans as conditions change.**

Q: Should individuals and families have a plan if an outbreak occurs?

A: There are actions we all can take as individuals to be prepared for COVID-19. The same actions you take to prevent the spread of flu put you in a good position for any respiratory illness - cover your cough, wash your hands (especially after being in public spaces, shaking hands), stay home if you are sick, and get your flu shot! Individuals and families should also monitor the CDC COVID-19 website for updated travel advisories before making plans to travel internationally.

New OHSEP Director Named For Iberville Parish



Iberville Parish recently named Clint Moore as Director of the Parish Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness/911. Clint takes over from Laurie Doiron who left in January.

Clint Moore

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www.ibervilleparish.com/Departments/Emergency-



Parish Profile - St Charles Parish

St. Charles Parish Drone Presentation

On February 14, 2020, FlyMotion's "Supporting Those Who Serve 19 States 26 City Tour" visited the St. Charles Parish Department of Homeland Security and Emergency. To showcase the latest in cutting edge drone and drone detection technology. In attendance was Public safety, government, defense professionals. Agencies and organizations researching communications solutions as well as Agencies & organizations in search of UAS program development including equipment, training, support.

The 4 hour training and demonstration was free of charge to all Local, State and Federal partners and first responders. Also in attendance was St. Charles Industrial Mutual Aid partners who were provided the opportunity to learn more about the technical and deployment side of the AeroScope Drone Detection System set to be deployed here in the coming months.

FLYMOTION's "Supporting Those Who Serve Tour" is bringing the solutions to you. At no cost, your agency will gain hands-on exposure to the latest drone platforms and innovative technologies being utilized by first responders today.



Founded:	1807
Named For:	Saint Charles (Saint Charles Borromeo)
Largest Community:	Luling
Total Area:	411 square miles
Population (2010):	52,780



OHSEP Director

Joe Ganote

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www.stcharlesparish-la.gov/departments/emergency-preparedness

For more information:  **FLYMOTION** flymotionus.com

Watershed Initiative Sub recipient Training

GOHSEP partnered with the Office of Community Development to provide training and technical assistance at the Louisiana Watershed Initiative Sub Recipient Training, held at the Louisiana Housing Corporation location on February 4-6, 2020. This endeavor aligns goals and priorities to examine planning, programming and development, strengthen community capacity and to build equity and resiliency. This is not an easy task as it involves essential community stakeholders and resources to reduce risk by understanding and planning to address risk and vulnerabilities. Genea Lathers, GOHSEP's Plans Branch Manager, was a highlighted speaker and continues to spearhead the Long-Term Recovery efforts for our agency.

For more information, contact Rubby Douglas at rubby.douglas2@la.gov.



School Safety Training

Everyone has a role to play in improving the safety of our students and the security of our schools. By working together, we can help prevent future tragedies, and mitigate their effects when those incidents do occur. When K–12 students head to class each day, they should find safe havens for learning, free from threats and hazards. Creating such an atmosphere requires collaboration between school officials and their community partners to provide a whole-community response. Together, we have made steady progress in strengthening the schools of Louisiana and we must continue to press ahead.



GOHSEP's Travis Thompson discussing school safety training.

The U.S. Department of Education has awarded Grants to States for the School Emergency Management (GSEM) programs. Louisiana mandates that all elementary and secondary public schools prepare, maintain and exercise a crisis management and response plan to help ensure



every student, teacher and school employee is in a safe and secure facility and prepared to respond in the event of an emergency or disaster incident. [LSU-NCBRT/ACE](#) provides free training and technical assistance to Local Education Agencies (LEAs) for the development and im-

plementation of high-quality school Emergency Operations Plans (EOPs). As a nationally recognized training agency with core capabilities in emergency management and first responder training, LSU NCBRT/ACE boasts over 20 years of programmatic experience in developing and delivering training to prepare our nation's first responders. Their team of highly qualified subject matter expert instructors are available to provide expert review and feedback to Louisiana K-12 institutions; public, private, and charter schools on their EOPs. The review process identifies strengths and recommends areas of improvement, and also ensures adequate assistance from community partners or response agencies. After EOPs are reviewed, the program will provide technical assistance workshops, walking schools/LEAs through developing training and exercise plans in support of their EOPs to ensure that people are prepared to respond when an emergency happens.

A large part of EOPs is making it easier for 9-1-1 and first responders to take action. There is no way to control where an emergency happens, which means staff members must have the ability to contact 9-1-1 and alert staff regardless of where they are located; sports fields, cafeteria, parking lots, etc. Louisiana State Police and RAVE Mobility Safety have partnered to address this with the RAVE Panic Button App. The App is designed to speed emergency response by simultaneously placing a 9-1-1 call while delivering immediate notification of the nature and location of the emergency to other employees and first responders. Included in this school safety initiative is the option for PSAPs to receive additional information related to a Panic Button activation, as well as the ability to deliver follow-up notifications to any school within their jurisdiction. East Baton Rouge Parish designees are pictured completing Implementation & Administrator training for their school campuses.



The FY 2019 Student, Teachers, and Officers Preventing

(STOP) School Violence Grant Program is designed to improve school security by providing students and teachers with the tools they need to recognize, respond quickly to, and help prevent acts of violence. The program's objective is to increase school safety by implementing training and school threat assessments and/or intervention teams to identify school violence risks among students; technological solutions such as anonymous reporting technology that can be implemented as a mobile phone-based app, a hotline, or a website in the applicant's geographic area to enable students, teachers, faculty, and community members to anonymously identify threats of school violence; or other school safety strategies that assist in preventing violence. Grant Solicitation is available at this link: [bjaojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh186/files/media/document/bja-2020-17313.pdf](https://bja.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh186/files/media/document/bja-2020-17313.pdf)

For more information about this article, you may contact Travis Thompson trevisthompson@la.gov with GOHSEP's Homeland Security Division.

GOHSEP Celebrates Mardis Gras



GOHSEP Celebrates Mardis Gras



Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Training



GOHSEP, the Lt. Governor's Office and East Feliciana's Parish of Homeland Security & Emergency Preparedness hosted a Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training for Teens. These young men and women joined the training because they would like to volunteer to help out their communities in a disaster. Local people best solve local problems, and this is a unique way that a parish can build support with its own to support recovery and response. GOHSEP's Maria "Camila" Medina, Preparedness Officer of our Community Preparedness Branch, supported these training efforts and helps coordinate other training to strengthen resources on both a state and local level.

For more information:

Maria "Camila" Medina maria.medina@la.gov

Rubby Douglas at rubby.douglas2@la.gov.



CERT educates individuals about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. Using training learned in the classroom and during exercises, CERT volunteers can assist others in their community following a disaster when professional responders are not immediately available to help. CERT volunteers are also encouraged to support emergency response agencies by taking an active role in emergency preparedness projects.

For more information, visit: www.ready.gov/cert

Employee Spotlight For February

Dana Michelli

Title: Homeland Security Grant Program Manager

Division: Grants and Administration

Length of Service at GOHSEP: 13 years

What has been your favorite part of working at GOHSEP:

My favorite part of working at GOHSEP is knowing that we help the citizens of Louisiana prepare to protect themselves in the event of a disaster and/or emergency. Also, I have made some friendships that I know will last a lifetime.

If you could switch your job with anyone else within GOHSEP, whose job would you want:

The GOHSEP Get a Game Plan Gator.

List three words to best describe yourself:

Honest, loyal and hardworking.

If you could write a book about yourself, what would you name it:

Once Upon a Detour

Any random facts you could share with us:

My daughter loves lizards. She started catching them when she was around 3 and now she is 11. I used to be scared of them but she has thrown them on me so many times I have grown to love them too. We have five lizards who live with us. Four of them are regular outdoor lizards and for Christmas we purchased a Crimson Day Gecko, Charlie.



2020 LOUISIANA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

Lake Charles, Louisiana

Monday May 4th - Thursday May 7th, 2020

REGISTER TODAY AT WWW.LAEMC.ORG

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The Pre Conference Annual Golf Classic will take place at the L'auberge Contraband Bayou Golf Club on May 4th

Please visit www.laemc.org for more information

REGISTER NOW FOR THE MAY CONFERENCE

You may register on-line at www.laemc.org or request a registration form by calling (225) 408-4757

Early Bird Full Registration Rate runs thru March 30, 2020

Full Registration Rate applies after March 30, 2020

Please submit Golf Tournament registration by April 10, 2020

SPEAKERS AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Speakers To Include: Governor John Bel Edwards, Lt. Governor Billy Nungesser, FEMA Region 6 Administrator Tony Robinson, GOHSEP Director James Waskom and others

Plenary Sessions and Breakout training related to Emergency Management, Infrastructure and Health and Medical

Pre-Conference and Post Conference Training Opportunities including a Grant Workshop, Cyber Security and a Active Shooter course

Exhibit Hall for vendor product and service offerings

LEMC SPONSORED BY LEPA AND GOHSEP

PREPARE

PREVENT

RESPONSE

RECOVER

MITIGATE



Preparedness is a shared responsibility and calls for the involvement of everyone - not just our government. By working together, everyone helps keep our families, neighbors, communities and State safe from harm and resilient when confronted with impacts from an emergency or disaster event.

- o How have you involved your local community in your preparedness efforts?
- o Do you have an outreach program tailored to reach your community stakeholders?
- o Contact our Preparedness Section if you have questions at gohsepplanning@la.gov or (225) 925-7500.

Webster Parish Preliminary Damage Assessments (PDA)



Representatives from GOHSEP, the [Small Business Administration](#) (SBA) and Webster Parish OHSEP, inspected over 44 properties to assess for damages incurred during the Severe Weather event that took place on January 11, 2020. This Joint effort was successful as 27 properties met the threshold outlined by SBA. The final report is being compiled for the SBA Declaration to be made.

For more information:

Rubby Douglas at rubby.douglas2@la.gov.

Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA)

Preliminary Damage Assessments are conducted to enable FEMA, as well as state, local, tribal, and territorial partners to determine the magnitude of damage and impact of disasters. The process starts at the local level where damage details are initially collected, shared and validated by State, Tribal, and Territorial authorities. The state, tribe or territory generally has 30 days from the start of the incident to determine whether or not federal assistance in the form of FEMA Individual Assistance, Public Assistance or other federal programs may be necessary. Not every incident will result in the need for a PDA or federal assistance. Extensions may be granted upon request.

For more information visit: www.fema.gov

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

For questions or comments about the birthdays, contact: Tiffany Johnson - tiffany.l.johnson@la.gov

Paul Davis III (Sub-Recipient Monitoring)	03/04	Cody Landry (Homeland Security Grants)	03/13
Amy Maglone (Public Assistance Tech Services)	03/05	Dinah Riggs (Public Assistance Disaster Oversight)	03/24
Ellen Ibert (Public Assistance Tech Services)	03/11		

UPCOMING EVENTS

To sign up or for more information about the training, visit: gohsep.la.gov/resources/training-events-schedule

TRAINING

March 9-10, 2020	ICS 400 - Advanced Incident Command System - DeRidder, Louisiana
March 10, 2020	G191 - ICS - EOC Interface - Lake Charles, Louisiana
March 11, 2020	G775 - EOC Management and Operations - Lake Charles, Louisiana
March 10-12, 2020	Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Train the Trainer Course - Baton Rouge, Louisiana
March 12-13, 2020	ICS 300 Intermediate ICS for Expanding Incidents for Operational First Responders - Port Allen, Louisiana
March 14, 2020	ICS 200 Introduction to the Incident Command - Gray, Louisiana
March 16-18, 2020	ICS 300 Intermediate ICS for Expanding Incidents for Operational First Responders - Baton Rouge, Louisiana
March 18, 2020	DMP 580 - Disaster Recovery for Senior Officials - Alexandria, Louisiana
March 18, 2020	Procurement: Are You Prepared? - Thibodaux, Louisiana
March 20, 2020	ICS 400 - Advanced Incident Command System - Baton Rouge, Louisiana
March 24, 2020	G191 - ICS - EOC Interface - Baton Rouge, Louisiana
March 25, 2020	G775 - EOC Management and Operations - Baton Rouge, Louisiana
March 26, 2020	MGT 415 - Disaster Recovery In Rural Communities - Baton Rouge, Louisiana
March 26-27, 2020	ICS 300 Intermediate ICS for Expanding Incidents for Operational First Responders - Port Allen, Louisiana
April 1-2, 2020	MGT-319 - Medical Countermeasures: Point of Dispensing, Plan & Response - Franklinton, Louisiana
April 7-9, 2020	Per 275 - Law Enforcement Active Shooter Emergency Response - Scott, Louisiana
April 18, 2020	ICS 700 National Incident Management System (NIMS), An Introduction - Gray, Louisiana
April 21-20, 2020	2020 Community Exercise for Region 3 Healthcare Providers - Napoleonville, Louisiana
April 22, 2020	Louisiana Elected Officials Emergency Management Summit - Thibodaux, Louisiana
May 4-7, 2020	2020 Louisiana Emergency Management Conference (LEMC) - Lake Charles, Louisiana
May 7-8, 2020	DMP 480 - Introduction to Disaster Recovery Public Assistance - New Orleans, Louisiana
May 8, 2020	DMP 580 - Disaster Recovery for Senior Officials - New Orleans, Louisiana
May 9, 2020	ICS 800 National Response Framework, An Introduction - Gray, Louisiana
June 23-26, 2020	DOT - 501 Hazardous Materials Transportation Train the Trainer - Lake Charles, Louisiana
July 9-10, 2020	MGT-319 - Medical Countermeasures: Point of Dispensing, Plan & Response - Metairie, Louisiana

NEW HIRES

Brittini Dogan (Facility Management)
Brittany Garnet (Public Assistance Closeout)
Shannon Jackson (Public Assistance Closeout)

Shannon Davis-Parker (Public Assistance Closeout)
Symantha Dandreaano (Preparedness)

RETIREMENTS

March 1, 2020 - **Joe Stewart** Region 8 Coordinator

ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES

Erin Gravois (Public Assistance Problem Resolution Officer)

PROMOTIONS

Norman Pineda Region 1 Coordinator	Lora Tran Public Assistance Closeout Specialist	Leah Jarrell Public Assistance Closeout Specialist	Kaitlin Cox Public Assistance Closeout Specialist
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STATE HOLIDAYS

Good Friday - April 10, 2020

Request For Articles

If you would like to include an article in future issues of *The GOHSEP Focus*, please contact: Your designated Agency Representative or

Mike Steele
 (225) 925-3966
mike.steele@la.gov

Steven Burr
 (225) 925-7423
steve.burr@la.gov



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